Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method for check payment verification, comprising the steps of:

5   obtaining account information from a check document;

comparing the account information from said check document to account information from a bank document to verify a match; and

associating the check document with the bank document upon

10   verifying a match.

2. A method for check payment verification, comprising the steps of:

capturing an image of at least a portion of each of a plurality of check documents in a set of check documents;

15   determining account information from said image for each of the plurality of check documents;

comparing the account information of at least one said plurality of check documents to the account information of at least one other check document in said set of check documents to

20   determine a match.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of obtaining further comprises the step of:

capturing an image of at least a portion of said check document.

4.   The method of Claim 1, wherein said bank document is a bank statement.

5.   The method of Claim 1, wherein said method is employed during a mail insertion operation.

6.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

monitoring the position of said bank document; and

regulating merger of said check documents with said bank document.

7.   The method of Claim 6, further comprising the step of:

identifying mismatches between check documents and said bank document.

8.   The method of Claim 8, further comprising the step of:

halting said set of check documents containing said identified mismatched check document.

9.   The method of Claim 9, further comprising the step of:

signaling an operator when a mismatched document is identified.

10.   The method of Claim 9, further comprising the step of:

diverting said set of check documents containing said identified mismatched check document.

11.   The method of Claim 12, further comprising the step of:

diverting said bank document containing said mismatched document.

12.   The method of Claim 7, wherein said mismatched document is marked as mismatched error document.

13.   The method of Claim 1, wherein said account information is a character string comprising a plurality of characters.

14.   The method of Claim 1, wherein said account information is matched using mismatch tolerance levels.

15.   The method of Claim 2, wherein said check set is matched with at least one second set of check documents, wherein each set contains account information for related accounts.

16.   A method for check verification comprising the steps of:

passing a check document set through a check feeder device, wherein said set comprises at least one check document;

imaging each check document in said set via an imaging device to create an image;

determining account information for each check document from each said image;

comparing said account information from each check document in said set to account number information on a bank document.

17.   The method of Claim 16, further comprising the steps of:

loading a bank document onto an automatic inserter machine;

imaging said bank document via a second imaging device;

determining account information for said document;

18. A device for check payment verification, comprising:

an imaging device, wherein said check document imaging device images at least a portion of each check document in a set of check documents; and

a computer, said computer in communication with said imaging device, wherein said computer reads at least a portion of said image of each said check document for account number information and compares the account information of each check document in said set to account information from every other check document in said set.

19. A device for check payment verification, comprising:

an imaging device, wherein said imaging device images at least a portion of each check document in a set of check documents; and

a computer, said computer in communication with said imaging device, wherein said computer reads at least a portion of said image of each said check document for account information and compares the account information of each check document in said set to account information from a bank document to determine a match.

20. The device as claimed in Claim 19, further comprising:

a bank document imaging device, wherein said bank document imaging device images at least a portion of said bank document containing account number information;

21. The device as claimed in Claim 20, wherein said imaging device comprises:

a light source, said light source illuminating said document;

a camera, said camera positioned to obtain an image of at least a portion of said check document;

a trigger device; said trigger device sensing said check document and activating said camera to obtain an image of said check document.

22. The device as claimed in Claim 21, wherein said trigger device comprises:

a trigger sensor, positioned to sense the presence of a document;

a trigger mechanism operatively connected to said imaging device for activating said imaging device; and

a trigger amplifier, operatively connecting said trigger sensor and said trigger mechanism.

23. The device as claimed in Claim 21, wherein said imaging device is a digital, region of interest camera.

24. A check verification system comprising:

an automated in-line mailing device (AIM), having a bank
document imaging device positioned to image bank documents
traveling along an AIM conveyor;

a check feeder, having a check document imaging device

5 positioned to image check documents merging with said AIM
conveyor;

a computer for processing images obtained from the bank
document imaging device and the check document imaging device
for comparison of account information;

10   25.   The system as claimed in Claim 24, further comprising:

a document control system, said document control system in
communication with said computer, wherein said document control
system operates with said computer to regulate said check
documents and said bank statements during a mail insertion

15 operation.

     26.   The system as claimed in Claim 24, further comprising:

a control panel, said control panel in communication with
said computer.

     27.   The system as claimed in Claim 25, wherein said check

20 feeder device further comprises:

a drive assembly for controlling the rate of checks passing
through the check feeder.

28.   The system as claimed in Claim 24, wherein said check feeder is halted when a mismatch between said bank document and said check document is detected by said computer.

29.   The system as claimed in Claim 24, wherein said check feeder marks mismatched check documents for diverting.

30.   The system as claimed in Claim 24, wherein said check feeder diverts mismatched check documents

31.   The system as claimed in Claim 24, wherein said AIM diverts mismatched checks and statement documents.

32.   The device as claimed in Claim 19, wherein said account information comprises a character string of numbers.

34.   The device as claimed in Claim 21, wherein said computer matches check document sets which contain related account information to said bank document.

35.   The device as claimed in Claim 21, wherein said computer matches said check documents to said bank documents using selectable mismatch tolerance levels.

36.   A device for check payment verification, comprising:

means for determining account information from each check in a set of check documents;

means for determining account information from a bank statement; and

means for determining whether said check document account information matches said bank statement account information.

5